

Mithya is that which is non-existent in its SUBSTRATUM

(Jagadgurur
Babu)

KALYANA-KALPATARU

JUL 99

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Ravi
Sukumar
11/11/99

spiritual life
of
gods

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Gita
p. 222



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we men are
alone from spiritual
path

Ravi
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J. N. Prasad

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1999

If you are searching to
judge men of men you
must be in the world with
the eyes of a man

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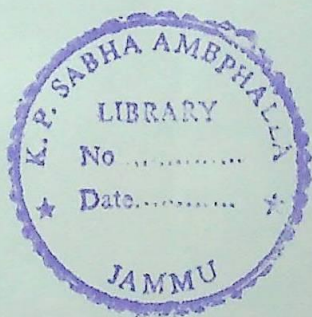
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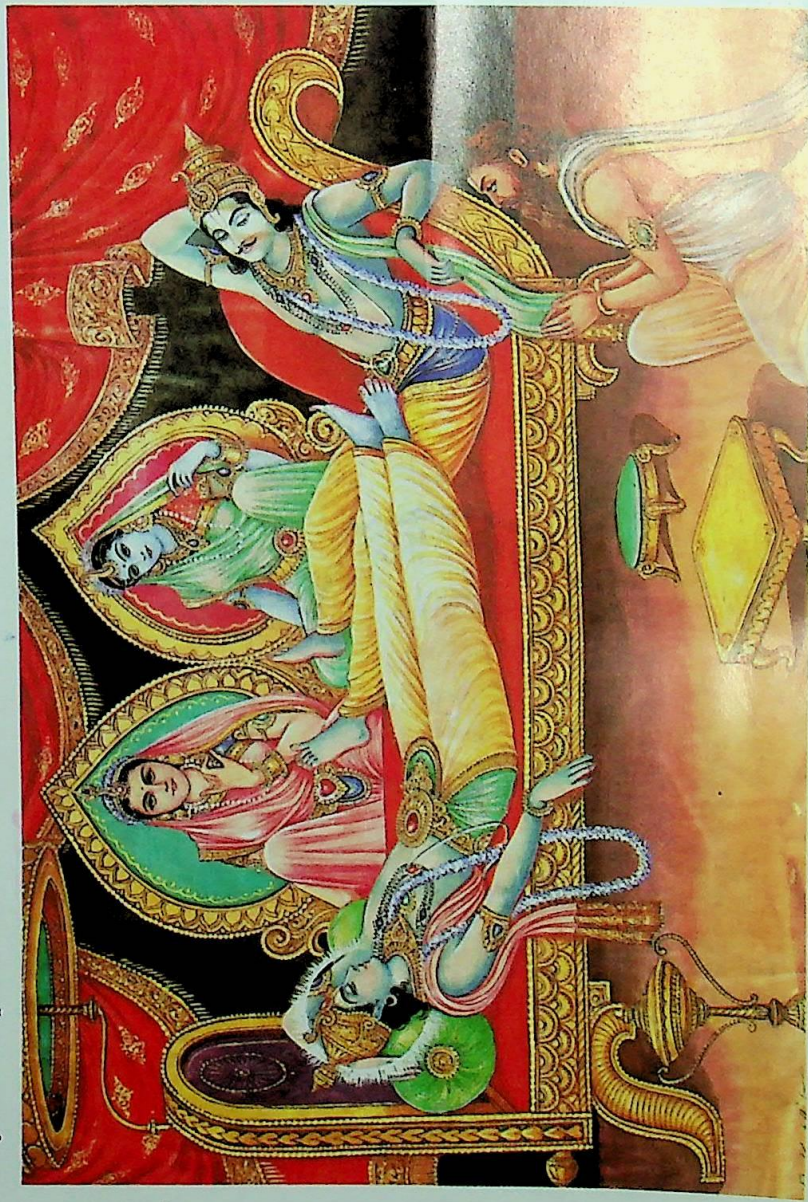
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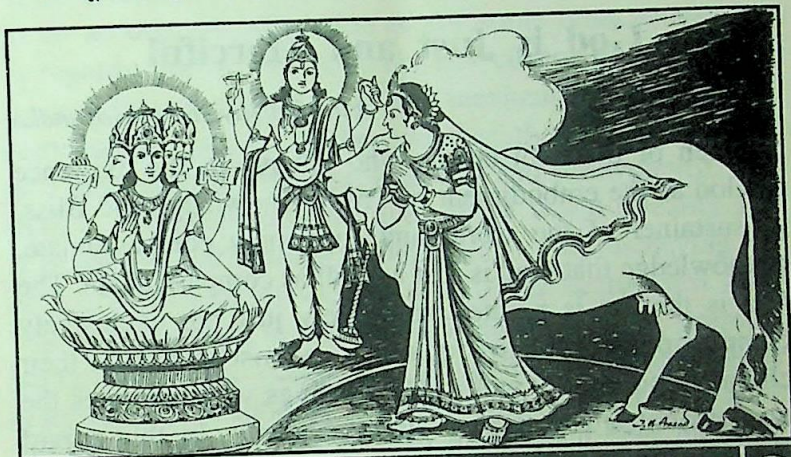
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Lord Kṛṣṇa in the inner apartment of Arjuna

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते। पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



KALYANA-KALPATARU

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IDEAS AND LOVE FOR GOD

No. 44

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अर्जुनोत्सङ्गौ पादौ केशवस्योपलक्षये ।
अर्जुनस्य च कृष्णायां सत्यायां च महात्मनः ॥

"Sañjaya beheld Keśava's feet resting upon Arjuna's lap while those of the high-souled Arjuna rested upon the laps of Kṛṣṇā and Satyabhāmā—one each."

(Mahābhārata, Udyoga Parva 59. 7)



God is Just and Merciful

—Late Sri Jayadayal Goyandka

Men of different creeds who believe in the existence of God as the embodiment of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss, as sustainer of the world and supremely compassionate, acknowledge that God is just as well as compassionate. The fact is that he is neither exclusively just nor exclusively compassionate. The two qualities co-exist in him at their climax concurrently and in His dealings with creatures the two attributes are at play simultaneously. In this regard some people raise the doubt as to how the two attributes—justice and compassion could co-exist under the sway of his merciful trait. If a judge sitting on the bench does not award punishment to the real culprit deserving punishment or awards him lesser punishment than he deserves, does this act not adversely affect his judgment or in case he awards the strictest punishment, does his sense of mercy not remain quite ineffectual ? Similarly dispensations by God also may be affected one's not bearing justice and mercy simultaneously. Similarly dispensations by God may be just devoid of Mercy or may be full of Mercy but devoid of justice.

It is not an easy job to remove such a doubt. For a man like myself it is but childish to deal at length with the divine attributes or to make comments on them but a humble effort is being made here with a view to extol the divine attributes as well as for the sake of my own amusement. The fact is that man-made laws can never stand

at par with the divine laws. Even if a man does not make laws for vested interests, he is certainly affected by circumstances and environment. He cannot be quite unerring in his efforts to probe into future. Errors are likely to creep in on account of infatuation or for some other reason but as regards God—there is hardly any chance of error being made. Moreover God being the inexhaustible treasure of compassion, justice and benevolence the divine laws are also impregnated with mercy, justice and benevolence. The truth is that man who conceives of the world a reality and is devoid of selflessness cannot frame laws displaying his profound sense of justice, mercy and large heartedness. God who is motiveless in all respect friend to all, the supreme being having an ocean of compassion at heart, whose compassion, friendliness, love and affection and such other virtues are abysmally deep, can frame such laws but such a thing is beyond the capacity of the common man. Hence although man-made laws can hardly stand in comparison with the divine laws nevertheless compassion and impartiality may be found to co-exist in man as well. To prove this some examples are being given below—

A business man named Rāma Lāla had a sum of two thousand rupees outstanding against Nārāyaṇa Prasāda who was *Kāyastha* by caste. Nārāyaṇa Prasāda was a truthful and honest man but his entire business went to the walls for the calamities that overtook him, were many. All the belongings of his household so much so that even those ornaments of his wife which were sacred to her were sold out and he had to take up a small job of forty rupees a month. With this meagre income he was hardly able to support his large family but more could hardly be expected at a time when there was so much of unemployment everywhere. Rāma Lāla demanded his money times and again but in no way could Nārāyaṇa Prasāda, afford to pay

back the money. Rāma Lāla filed a suit in the court against him. The judge who was hearing the case was very noble, well versed in laws, a dispenser of justice and merciful also. Presenting himself before the judge he said—"My Lord, it is true that I owe rupees two thousand to Rāma Lāla and though I have honest intentions to pay back the money, yet at present I am in very straitened circumstances, I haven't even a shell in my house, neither I own any property. You can to your full satisfaction ascertain this through your own sources. I work on a job of forty rupees a month; my family including the children consists of as many as eight members and with great difficulty we are able to make both ends meet. Still I will pay off Mr. Rāma Lāla's debt in annual instalments of rupees two hundred in face of all sorts of hardships. Notwithstanding that if Mr. Rāma Lāla insists on sending me to the jail and if you pronounce the sentence of imprisonment, I shall gladly go to the prison but shall not declare myself insolvent, although in that case my family will undoubtedly have to face terrible hardships. Your lordship may do as you deem proper.

Hearing the truthful account narrated by Nārāyaṇa Prasāda, the judge was satisfied and he said—"Well, you reconcile yourself with your money-lender. In view of your pitiable condition he ought to condescend to your proposal. Nārāyaṇa Prasāda tried his best to explain his position and entreated him again and again but Rāma Lāla would not yield to his request. So the case was put up before the court and it was proved on evidence that Nārāyaṇa Prasāda owed rupees two thousand to Rāma Lāla. The judge made a query and found that the facts narrated by Nārāyaṇa Prasāda about himself were true in toto. Rāma Lāla himself admitted the veracity of his statement. So in spite of Rāma Lāla's objections, the judge passed a decree of rupees two thousand against Nārāyaṇa Prasāda to be paid in annual instalments

of rupees two hundred as desired by him. Noticing the mercifulness of the judge Nārāyaṇa Prasāda was extremely delighted. Does it evince from the judgment that the judge was unjust or biased? Should this action of the judge be regarded as warped by bribe? Why should this not be regarded as an act of mercy? As it is, mercy and justice co-exist in this case. If worldly laws can be so nobly inspired can the divine mercy and justice be held in contempt in case God passes a decree in favour of His devotee in accordance with his desire?

Now please go through the following two examples of criminal cases—

Govinda Rāma and Rāma Prasāda lived in the same street. They often entered into arguments with each other. There was every chance of a discussion leading to a quarrel. One day during mutual discussions, it so happened that Rāma Prasāda flew into rage on hearing an argument that was against his concept. In anger man often loses his discrimination, eventually he dealt Govinda Rāma a few severe blows. Govinda Rāma filed a criminal suit against him. As soon as Rāma Prasāda came to know about it he presented himself before the magistrate and truthfully narrated to him what had happened. He said—"We were having discussions on some religious matter and Govinda Rāma's action of reproaching me was justifiable. But I took very ill of it. I could not control my anger that is why I committed the offence unadvisedly. I am entirely responsible for the fault. I am quite repentant of what I did. Now I am ready to abide by your orders." The magistrate said—"Well I can't do anything in the matter. You go to Govinda Rāma and ask for his forgiveness. He can forgive you if he so desires. This is the easiest way out for you." On the suggestion of the magistrate Rāma Prasāda went to the house of Govinda Rāma and falling at his feet and

confessing his offence begged for his pardon saying that since he had taken refuge in his revered feet he would have to pardon him in spite of his guilt, Hearing his pathetic appeal and marking the true sense of repentance at his heart, Govinda Rāma yielded to his request and put in an application for the withdrawal of his case. The magistrate granted the application and honourably acquitted Rāma Prasāda. Can anyone dare say that in this case any injustice was done either by the magistrate or Govinda Rāma or they failed to show Mercy? Once upon a time on account of committing offence against Ambarīśa, the devotee, even Lord Viṣṇu had to direct sage Durbāsā to seek shelter with him and when he got there it was Ambarīśa who saved his life by offering prayers to the disc. In this case also the sense of justice and mercy were at work simultaneously.

In a certain village there lived a good natured and virtuous man named Śiva Rāma. In the same village there lived a dacoit also. Śiva Rāma sometimes heard from him the adventures of robberies committed by him. Bad association often leads to dire consequences. One day Śiva Rāma was tempted. Greed had polluted his wits so without considering the pros and cons he robbed off three thousand rupees from the house of a householder named Nanda Rāma. Those who resisted were beaten with cudgels for self-defence.

When he reached home with the booty he narrated to his wife the story at length. Now Śiva Rāma's wife was a very virtuous lady who was shocked to hear of this deed of her husband. She bowed at the feet of her husband and suggested to him what should be his duty and requested him to return the money without any delay. Śiva was indeed a nice man. He was far from being a professional dacoit. It was bad company that had polluted his wits. On the suggestion of his wife like the flame of a lamp he could clearly see through his crime. On being hinted by his wife

he at once went to the collector's residence with the money and placing the money and the ornaments before him and surrendering himself to him implored thus—"I have done a great crime. I was prompted by greed which polluted my wits. I unjustly oppressed poor Nanda Rāma and committed such a heinous crime as was never done by any of my forefathers. My guilt admits of no excuse but since I have surrendered myself to you, please protect me. I promise not to commit such a grave crime in future." The collector was convinced with what he said. He thought to himself that if he had bad intention he would not have presented himself before him with the booty. Detaining him there he sent for Nanda Rāma through the police. Just at the time when Nanda Rāma was thinking of going to lodge a report with the police, a constable approached him and told him that the person who had committed the robbery in his house was present at the collector's bungalow with the looted property and that the collector had summoned him without delay. Nanda Rāma was much pleased to hear about the recovery of the lost property. He at once accompanied the policeman to the collector's bungalow. Seeing him Śiva Rāma held his feet by the hands and shedding tears begged for forgiveness. Nanda Rāma would not listen to his appeal and threatened that he would spare no effort to see him behind the bars. Eventually the matter was referred to the court. On being cross examined by the collector he frankly repeated what he had stated at the bungalow. At this the collector enquired of Nanda Rāma what he had to say about the conduct of Śiva Rāma. Nanda Rāma had to acknowledge that he knew him and that he belonged to a noble family and he must have been led astray on account of living in the company of dacoits. But he insisted that he must be punished otherwise he would again commit such a crime. The collector was a kind hearted person. He was very much

influenced by his uprightness and truthfulness so after giving him a warning for future, acquitted him. Should the collector showing mercy that way be considered as unjust. Likewise when a man seeks refuge in God with a truthful and upright mind, He grants him salvation.

An objection may be raised in this regard that all the instances cited here pertain to petty offences. In a murder case even if the parties are reconciled the judge hearing the case has no discretionary power to acquit the criminal of the charge and in case he does so he is sure to be regarded as unjust. Before an answer to this question is given it will be proper to keep in mind that a murder or the killing of men is committed with three different motives—for a justful cause, unintentionally or intentionally in an unfair manner. The murder committed for a justful cause is hardly ever reckoned a murder as such. The murder committed disinterestedly for the sake of safeguarding one's supreme duties, for public welfare, for the cause of justice or for self defence is not treated as cognizable offence. The judge awarding capital punishment to the culprit for his guilt or the executer of death sentence are not regarded as criminals. The truth is that the person using weapon against a robber for the protection of his money and life is considered to be worthy of a reward. Recently a Bengali young lady killed a young man who had entered her house with an ill motive. She was arrested but the court praising her action acquitted her. In man made laws, however, there is a chance, in some cases at least, of a law abiding person to be misapprehended as a criminal deserving punishment. But there is no scope for such a mistake being committed by one who has eyes on all sides.

The second type of killing is one which is committed unintentionally. The culprit in such a murder case is certainly regarded as guilty because it is on account of his

imprudence that the murder is committed but the culprit in such a case is often acquitted of the charge if he fights out his case properly or at the most is awarded a commuted punishment for want of proper pleading.

The third type of murder is one which is prompted by anger, greed or enmity and is committed intentionally. The culprit of such a murder cannot be acquitted by the court under the existing laws of the land in case his guilt is proved.

The instances of the first one have already been cited earlier, one may come across many more of this type. Once Hīrā Lāla Agarwāl, a tyrant, was killed by a Nepalee youth named Khadga Bahādura who was awarded light punishment for his guilt but on the appeal of the people the viceroy condoned his punishment.



God is the lover and the beloved at the same time. He loves the devotee and is the beloved of the latter. God's love is equally spread over all. It is only those who love God who are aware of the love of God. God is not partial to anyone, but those who pray to Him feel His grace. It is the sincere prayer of the devotee that brings about the materialisation of the grace of God.

—Swami Sivananda

Two kinds of beauty: we have our outward appearance, our inward appearance. Don't be concerned about the outward beauty that depends on jewelry or beautiful clothes, or hair arrangement. Be beautiful inside your hearts, with the lasting charm of a gentle and quiet spirit which is so precious to God.

—Other Men's Flowers

Renunciation of One's Desire, The Easy Means of Emancipation

—Swami Ramsukhdas

As far as possible try to fulfil the just desires of others. We need not fulfil their unjust desire because it is not for their good. It is our duty to fulfil their just demands (desires) if it is within our power. If it is beyond our power to fulfil them, we should ask for forgiveness.

The *Gītā* lays emphasis on renunciation of desires for money, power and authority etc. I studied books, listened to discourses, gave a serious thought and started lecturing on 'desire'. Thus I came to know that earnest wish for money, pleasures, honour and praise etc., is desire. Then I thought over renunciation of desires and classified them under various heads. Finally I came to the conclusion that desire is 'what you want from your heart'. I have explained it so that you may understand it quickly and your time may be saved. So long as you don't renounce desire, you will not attain peace, you will have a burning sensation and you will remain sad and dependent.

It is a matter of sorrow that people have a false notion that they become independent if their desires are fulfilled. But the fact is that we shall have to be dependent on the person who will satisfy our desire. What seems to be relief is indeed suffering and what seems independence is indeed dependence. You want your wife, sons, brothers, parents and other near and dear ones to behave and act as you wish. This wish of yours is very fatal as it will deprive you of

God-Realization and will lead you to hells without doubt.

Once I gave a lecture to prisoners in a jail. I said to the prisoners, "You committed crimes as you wished but are undergoing imprisonment against your wish. Like you, all worldly people are prisoners. They act as they wish but they have to reap the fruit of their actions dependently. Hells and eighty-four lac forms of life are prisons. Why are worldly people imprisoned? They are imprisoned because their conduct is arbitrary. It is doubtful whether you can do as you wish but by having desires you will be imprisoned and you will suffer without any doubt. Therefore, satisfy the just desires of the members of your family which are sanctioned by the scriptures and which are within your power. It will lead you to emancipation. But don't satisfy their unjust demand because it is not for their welfare.

I have heard the story of a saint whether it is true or untrue, God knows. He kept mum but did a piece of work if he was asked by anyone. Women prepared mortar and asked him to plaster the wall, he did it. He placed the jar of water on heads, took it to their houses and swept their houses. He ate the food if some one gave it to him but he didn't demand it. A woman had no issue. She rendered service to him with devotion. She fed and clothed him. After some days she spread her bed and expressed her desire to have an issue. He did not agree to her request because it was adulterous, though in the past he always did what any woman desired. Then he went away from there. So we should do what is proper and just. But we have not to do any action which is for our pleasures and for ills of others.

The Lord in the *Gītā* declares, "He who has renounced all thoughts of the world, is said to have attained to *Yoga*" (*Gītā* 6/4). But he who has not renounced the thoughts of the world can be neither a '*Jñānayogī*' nor a '*Bhaktiyogī*' nor a '*karmayogī*' nor a '*Haṭhayogī*' nor a '*Tapayogī*' nor

a 'Rājayogī'. The Lord declares, "None becomes a *Yogī* without renouncing thoughts of the world" (*Gītā* 6/2). If you have learnt to fulfil wishes of others, your thoughts of the world will be easily renounced.

I also think that I should lecture on the topic which is liked by the audience because it will lead them, me and also other listeners to emancipation. So we should have such dealings with every one day and night. Thus we'll attain to perfection (emancipation) or *Yoga*. This is not difficult. First you may feel it a bit difficult to renounce your desire because you have been habituated of satisfying it. It seems difficult to renounce it because of your pride. But in fact it is easy for everyone whether he is a householder or a recluse, a brother or a sister, Hindu or a Muslim, a Christian or a Persian.

If our desire is fulfilled, we become proud of our achievement. But if it remains unfulfilled, we become angry. Both pride and anger are demoniac propensities. Therefore he who has thoughts of the world, can't escape demoniac propensities. These demoniac traits (propensities) lead to bondage, the cycle of birth and death. The Lord declares, "The demoniacal nature leads to bondage" (*Gītā* 16/5). If you don't possess thoughts of the world, you can't be endowed with demoniac nature.

There is nothing easier than emancipation. All disciplines of Action, Knowledge and Devotion are easy. But it is difficult to satisfy one's desire or taste. Is it not so?

Arjuna asked, "By what is a man impelled to commit sin?" The Lord replied, "This is desire" (*Gītā* 3/37). Satisfaction of one's own desire involves dependence rather than independence because it's satisfaction depends on others. Is it within our power to get our desires satisfied by others? Is it not dependence on others? 'He who is dependent on others can never dream of happiness' (*Mānasa* 1/101/3).

Listener:—Sire, should we stick to our point which seems to be true and just?

Svāmījī:—Don't stick to it if it depends upon others. But if your point is true, just and virtuous and involves your welfare at present and will also bear good fruit, stick to it. But it is wrong on our part if we expect others to stick to it.

Listener:—In a joint family, members live together. If the young ones don't obey their elders, it leaves a bad impression on the family. What to do?

Svāmījī:—If they don't obey, they will have to suffer. We will not be blamed for it. We should say what is right or just. If they obey you, it is well and good. But if they don't obey, it is better. How? If your wife, sons, grandsons and nephews etc., don't follow your just, good and virtuous point, you will not get entangled in attachment and the sense of mine. Several years ago in Calcutta I said, "If you had obeyed me, I would have been ensnared. I could not go anywhere. But it is very kind of you that you don't follow my advice, I remain free." We have to live under the control of those who obey us, we have to depend on them. Some people renounce their household life in order to become recluse. But you have become a recluse while living in your house because the members of your family don't obey you. But we should speak out what is for their welfare whether they follow it or not.



Realise that He, the infinite power within you, guides you, controls you and actuates you to do all things, at all times. Rise above conditioned conception of things that is to say, rise above the *Guṇas* and *Dwandvas*.

—The Mountain Path

Keep in Mind

—Late Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar

If you derive the least benefit from anyone, or should anyone contribute to your happiness in anyway, acknowledge his services from the bottom of your heart and feel grateful to him. Never for a moment think that the benefit or happiness you derived was due to your own *Prārabdha*, that he was only an instrument and did nothing to earn your gratitude. On the contrary, you should feel that he conferred a great boon on you by becoming instrumental in contributing to your happiness. Gratefully remember the help received from him, do not forget it throughout your life even circumstances have changed and always try to make him happy and be of service to him. Do not hesitate, when necessary, to acknowledge his services to you openly before a large gathering. This will foster mutual love between you and your benefactor and promote happiness and peace; the spirit of making others happy will grow from more to more among people, mutual sympathy and the spirit of service will receive encouragement. Remember that he who cherishes a feeling of gratitude towards his benefactor renders a great service to the world at large; for such an attitude pleases the heart of the benefactor, he feels encouraged, and the spirit of service and benevolence gets strengthened within him. God is pleased with those who are grateful and angry with those who are ungrateful. Therefore, be grateful and never forget the obligation of your benefactor.

It is the impurity of your own mind that is mainly responsible for bringing to your notice only the dark side of other's character. Make your own mind faultless and you will find that the number of sinners in this world is very much reduced.

Cultivate the habit of observing your own faults, examine the weaknesses of your heart very critically and you will realize that your mind is full of impurities; then you will hardly find any time to detect the faults of others.

Every thought arising in the mind of a man carries with it a feeling of love or hatred, which brings in joy or sorrow, and which prompts him to see virtue or vice in another. Even the vices of him whom we love appear to us as virtues, and the virtues of him whom we hate appear as vices. Unless we take off these coloured glasses of love and hatred from our eyes it is not possible to know a person truly.

Be an impartial observer of every thought-wave arising in your mind; very soon you will notice that no thought arises in your mind. This is a sovereign recipe for controlling the mind. Similarly, if you can dispassionately observe the impulses of love and hatred without identifying yourself with them, you will soon find the practice helpful in eradicating those impulses.

Life is very short; live amicably with all, behave well with all; scatter ambrosia everywhere and do not let fall even a drop of poison anywhere. Your conduct influenced by love is ambrosia and that influenced by hatred is poison.

If a person calls on you even for an hour, fill his heart with ambrosia through your loving and guileless behaviour; take care that none may catch poison from you. Remove all poison from the heart and fill it up with ambrosia and then scatter it at every step.



Rāja-Dharma

The fowler then said unto the *Brāhmaṇa*, saying, "Thou art now standing in place that is scarcely proper for thee, O sinless one. If it pleaseth thee, let us go to my abode, O holy one!"

Mārkaṇḍeya continued, "So be it," said the *Brāhmaṇa* unto him, gladly. And thereupon, the fowler proceeded towards his home with the *Brāhmaṇa* walking before him. And entering his abode that looked delightful, the fowler revered his guest by offering him a seat. And he also gave him water to wash his feet and face. And accepting these, that best of *Brāhmaṇas* sat at his ease. And he then addressed the fowler, saying, "It seems to me that this profession doth not befit thee. O fowler, I deeply regret that thou shouldst follow such a cruel trade." At these words of the *Brāhmaṇa* the fowler said, "This profession is that of my family, myself having inherited it from my sires and grandsires. O regenerate one, grieve not for me owing to my adhering to the duties that belong to me by birth. Discharging the duties ordained for me beforehand by the Creator, I carefully serve my superiors and the old. O thou best of *Brāhmaṇas*! I always speak the truth, never envy others; and give to the best of my power. I live upon what remaineth after serving the gods, guests, and those that depend on me. I never speak ill of anything, small or great. O thou best of *Brāhmaṇas*, the actions of a former life always follow the doer. In this world there are three principal professions, viz., agriculture, rearing of cattle, and

trade. As regards the other world, the three *Vedas*, knowledge, and the science of morals are efficacious. Service (of the other three orders) hath been ordained to be the duty of the *Śūdra*. Agriculture hath been ordained for the *Vaiśyas*, and fighting for the *Kṣatriyas*, while the practice of the *Brahmacarya* vow, asceticism, recitation of *Mantras*, and truthfulness have been ordained for the *Brāhmaṇas*. Over subjects adhering to their proper duties, the king should rule virtuously while he should set those thereto that have fallen away from the duties of their order. Kings should ever be feared, because they are the lords of their subjects. They restrain those subjects of theirs that fall away from their duties as they restrain the motions of the deer by means of their shafts. O regenerate *Rṣi*, there existeth not in the kingdom of Janaka a single subject that followeth not the duties of his birth. O thou best of the *Brāhmaṇas*, all the four orders here rigidly adhere to their respective duties. King Janaka punisheth him that is wicked, even if he be his own son; but never doth he inflict pain on him that is virtuous. With good and able spies employed under him, he looketh upon all with impartial eyes. Prosperity, and kingdom, and capacity to punish, belong, O thou best of *Brāhmaṇas*, to the *Kṣatriyas*. Kings desire high prosperity through practice of the duties that belong to them. The king is the protector of all the four orders. As regards myself, O *Brāhmaṇa*, I always sell pork and buffalo meat without slaying those animals myself. I sell meat of animals, O regenerate *Rṣi*, that have been slain by others. I never eat meat myself; never go to my wife except in her season; I always fast during the day, and eat, O regenerate one, in the night. Even though the behaviour of his order is bad, a person may yet be himself of good behaviour. So also a person may become virtuous, although he may be slayer of animals by profession. It is in consequence of the sinful

acts of kings that virtue decreaseth greatly, and sin beginneth to prosper. And when all this taketh place the subjects of the kingdom begin to decay. And it is then, O *Brāhmaṇa*, that ill-looking monsters, and dwarfs, and hunch-backed and large-headed wights, and men that are blind or deaf or those that have paralysed eyes or are destitute of the power of procreation, begin to take their birth. It is from the sinfulness of kings that their subjects suffer numerous mischiefs. But this our king Janaka casteth his eyes upon all his subjects virtuously, and he is always kind unto them who, on their part, ever adhere to their respective duties. Regarding myself, I always with good deeds please those that speak well, as also those that speak ill of me. Those kings that live in the observance of their own proper duties, who are always engaged in the practice of acts that are good and honest, who are of souls under complete control and who are endued with readiness and alacrity, may not depend upon anything else for supporting their power. Gift of food to the best of one's power, endurance of heat and cold, firmness in virtue, and a regard and tenderness for all creatures—these attributes can never find place in a person, without an innate desire being present in him of separating himself from the world. One should avoid falsehood in speech, and should do good without solicitation. One should never cast off virtue from lust, from wrath, or from malice. One should never joy immoderately at a good turn or grieve immoderately at a bad one. One should never feel depressed when overtaken by poverty, nor when so overtaken abandon the path of virtue. If at any time one doth what is wrong, he should never do its like again. One should always urge his soul to the doing of that which he regardeth as beneficial. One should never return wrong for wrong, but should act honestly by those that have wronged him. That wretched man who desireth to do what is sinful, slayeth himself. By

doing what is sinful, one only imitates them that are wicked and sinful. Disbelieving in virtue they that mock the good and the pure saying, 'There is no virtue' undoubtedly meet with destruction. A sinful man swelleth up like a leather bag puffed up with wind. The thoughts of these wretches filled with pride and folly are feeble and unprofitable. It is the heart, the inner soul, that discovereth the fool like the sun that discovereth forms during the day. The fool cannot always shine in the world by means of self-praise. The learned man, however, even if he be destitute of beauty, displayeth his lustre by refraining from speaking ill of others and well of himself. No example, however can be met with, in this world, of a person shining brilliantly on account of attributes to be found in him in their reputed measure. If one repenteth of a wrong done by him, that repentance washeth off his sin. The resolution of never doing it again saveth him from future sin, even as, O thou best of *Brāhmaṇas*, he may save himself from sin by any of those expiations obtained in the scriptures. Even this, O regenerate one, is the *Śruti* that may be seen in respect of virtue. He that having before been virtuous, committeth a sin, or committeth it unknowingly may destroy that sin. For virtue O *Brāhmaṇa*, driveth off the sin that men commit from ignorance. A man, after having committed a sin, should cease to regard himself any longer as a man. No man can conceal his sins. The gods behold what one does, also the Being that is within everyone. He that with piety and without detraction hideth the faults of the honest and the wise like holes in his own attire, surely seeketh his salvation. If a man seeketh redemption after having committed a sin, without doubt he is purged of all his sins and looketh pure and resplendent like the moon emerged from the clouds. A man that seeketh redemption is washed of all his sins, even as the sun, upon rising, dispelleth all darkness.

O best of *Brāhmaṇas*, it is temptation that constitutes the basis of sin. Men that are ignorant commit sin, yielding to temptation alone. Sinful men generally cover themselves with a virtuous exterior, like wells whose mouths are covered by long grass. Outwardly they seem to possess self-control and holiness and indulge in preaching virtuous texts which, in their mouth are of little meaning. Indeed, everything may be noticed in them except conduct that is truly virtuous!



What is *Mithyā* or unreality? The thing which appears but has no existence when examined in the context of its substratum. For example, it seems that silver is in the shell. But when the shell is examined, the silver is not found there. Or take the case of a rope which appears to be a snake. When we examine its substratum, the rope, the snake is not found there. *Mithyā*, or unreality is, therefore, that which is non-existent in its substratum.

—Swami Ram Tirtha

Believe in the divine possibilities. Completely dedicate yourself to the Lord. Have full trust in Him. Rest in peace. All cares, worries, anxieties, tribulations and egoistic efforts will terminate. Imperfection, defects and weakness even of a serious kind are no bar to spiritual progress. They can be removed through the grace of the Lord.

—Swami Sivananda

Sorrowing over the passing away of the body is pure folly; only what is perishable has resolved itself into its elements but the Truth is immortal, and we are, in our true essence, everlastingly one with it.

—The Mountain Path

The Journey

—Dr. R. D. Srivastava

Billions of years have rolled by,
Since my spirit departed from its celestial abode.
Ah! this mind boggling journey from virus to man,
And from man back to *Brahma*,
Innumerable vehicles my spirit boarded and discarded,
What agonies and ecstasies my embodied spirit has
undergone,
Who knows but a seer of past and Ākāśic record?
So many wombs it entered and then emerged,
To learn lessons and attain perfection,
Oh! when shall *Brahma* give his clarion call?
And beckon his estranged son back to cavern of his
heart.



The Salient Features of Sītā-Rāma's Personality in the Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa

(Continued from page 862)

—Dr. Mukunda Pati Tripathi 'Ratnamaliya'

The salient features of Rāma's personality—

(A) The Rāma of this *Rāmāyaṇa* possesses a multi-dimensional personality. He is not merely the *Avatāra* of Viṣṇu as in the *Vāl.* He is not merely the lord of his devotees as in the Bhakti tradition. He is also the Brahman of the *Vedas*. He is equal to thousands of *Avatāras* (Adh. VI. 7. 62).

(B) According to Dr. Whaling's estimation on nine occasions He is described as *Brahman*, on seventeen occasions He is described as *Puruṣa*. He is *Parameśvara* fourteen times, *Parēśa* three times, *Parēśvara* once. On over twenty occasions He is described as *Parātman* and over forty occasions He is described as *Paramātmā* in this *Grantha*.

(C) He is not only all the *Avatāras* of Viṣṇu. He is the *Virāṭ* body from which thousands of *Avatāras* proceed and to which they return when their work is ended (Adh. VI. 14—17).

(D) In the words of *Nārada*—"He is without change, pure and the form of knowledge." He is without qualities, without duality, beyond attributes, without defect, unmoving, beyond company, without beginning, middle or end, unthinkable, without limit, beyond speech or thought or

senses, beyond mind, beyond nature, unmanifest, immeasurable beyond self, beyond ken, imperishable, unborn, without hands and feet, without eyes and ears, without dependence, without limitation, without true being, without name and form, without stain, without energy, without another, without activity, beyond direction, space and time, not to be obtained by Brahmā etc., and so on.

(E) His positive features—

He is the true conscious bliss, the conscious, the highest bliss, the form of bliss, the root of conscious bliss, He is a mass of consciousness, the self of the consciousness. He is the root of happiness. He is peaceful pure, eternal, enlightened, delighted, omniscient, of matchless glory, always released.

(F) He is not only the *Nirguṇa Brahma* who is beyond the world. He is also *Brahma* in relation to the world.

(G) He is the self of the world, the inner dweller, the mover of the wheel of the world, the supreme place or abode of all the worlds. All beings are His places of abode. He is, in some sense, immanent and transcendent.

(H) He is the material universe as the *Virāṭ*. He is the source of *Avatāras* who appear in the material world. He is truly an all enveloping figure. To the man and *Avatāra* of *Vāl.*, the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* adds the whole level of *Brahman*. "According to this *Rāmāyaṇa* He is the Supreme lord who creates, preserves and destroys the world. He is the beginning of worlds, the world, the support of the world."

According to Nārada—"From Him alone the world came into being, in Him everything abides. In Him alone it is all absorbed." (II. 1. 25)

According to Ahalyā—"He alone having created the worlds for their protection established gods, men, animals and so on." (I. 5. 50)

According to Jaṭāyū—"Rāma is the cause of preservation, destruction and creation of all the worlds." (III. 8. 44)

According to Kausalyā—He is the beginning of worlds, without beginning, middle or end. (I. 3. 22)

According to Śuka Rāma is the primal *Nārāyaṇa* in person, the supreme and Sītā is in person the creatrix of the world. (VI. 4. 40)

(1) Suffice it to say that—

He is *Om* beyond the world and words, yet He is the world. He is the world with its distinction of word and meaning. He is without attributes and yet the soul of all attributes; subtler than the subtlest and grosser than the grossest, without beginning and yet the beginning of the world.

The Humanity of Rāma—

सर्वलक्षणसंयुक्तः सर्वधर्मपरायणः ।

(VI. 16. 33)

(A) On the human level Rāma is a moral, truthful, righteous and compassionate character. He is gentle and giver of happiness to all. He is established in the way of *Dharma*. He knows *Dharma*. He is the soul of *Dharma*. He is established in the way of truth. His glory is great. His glory is pure.

(B) He is strong, brave and fearless. He is potent enough to kill His enemies and if necessary to destroy the worlds. His weapons and specially His arrows are invincible. He is skilled in war. He is not only a warrior, He is also brave and strong. He is wise and prudent. As a good ruler of the world His glory will never dwindle. He is a *Rājārṣi*.

एकपत्नीव्रतो रामो राजर्षिः सर्वदा शुचिः ।

गृहमेधीयमखिलमाचरन् शिक्षयन् जनान् ॥

(VII. 4. 30)

Rājārṣi Rāma, always pious and dutiful, observing the purity of a faithful husband; fulfilled all His domestic and

regal droits with a view to teaching His subjects the ideal mode of living.

(C) As an infant He is naughty and sportive enough. As a developing child, He is modest, regular and disciplined. Rising early in the morning, He pays His obeisances to His parents and finishes His morning duties (*Snāna-Dhyāna*). He performs all His droits punctually and regularly—

प्रातरुत्थाय सुस्नातः पितरावभिवाद्य च।
पौरकार्याणि सर्वाणि करोति विनयान्वितः ॥

(I. 3. 64)

(D) As an ideal son, He is zealous enough to sacrifice His everything for the sake of His father's pleasure.

पित्रर्थे जीवितं दास्ये पिबेयं विषमुल्बणम् ॥

(II. 3. 59)

राज्यात्कोटिगुणं सौख्यं मम राजन्वने सतः ॥

(II. 3. 74)

Instead of finding fault in His banishment He discovers three great benefits—

(1) The protection of king's truth

(2) The fulfilment of divine will.

(3) The fructification of Kaikeyī's sweet, desire.

Nothing is really good or bad. It is thinking which makes that so. Rāma's right way of thinking sets everything to its right order. In the end of this article, having faith in the famous doctrine—"न हि कस्तूरिकामोदः शपथेन विभाव्यते" (The sweet fragrance of *Kastūri* can't be realised by mere verbal utterances) I can't help quoting some sweet *Ślokas* from this sublime scripture for the direct enjoyment of the erudite readers.

(1) रामः परात्मा प्रकृतेरनादि-
रानन्द एकः पुरुषोत्तमो हि ॥
स्वमायया कृत्स्नमिदं हि सृष्ट्वा
नभोवदन्तर्बहिरास्थितो यः ।

सर्वान्तरस्थोऽपि	निगूढ	आत्मा
स्वमायया	सृष्टमिदं	विचष्टे ॥

(I. 1. 17-18)

(2)	सोऽयं	परात्मा	पुरुषः	पुराणः
	एकः	स्वयं	ज्योतिरनन्त	आद्यः ।
	मायातनुं		लोकविमोहनीयां	
	धत्ते	परानुग्रह	एष	रामः ॥

(3)	बहिरन्तश्च	भूतानां	रामः	सर्वत्र	संस्थितः ।
	नामरूपादिभेदेन		तत्तन्मय		इवामलः ॥
	यथा	नानाप्रकारेषु	वृक्षेष्वेको		महानलः ।
	तत्तदाकृतिभेदेन		भिद्यतेऽज्ञानचक्षुषाम् ॥		

(VI. 2. 37-38)

x		x		x
(4)	विश्वोद्भवस्थितिलयादिषु		हेतुमेकं	
	मायाश्रयं		विगतमायमचिन्त्यमूर्तिम् ।	
	आनन्दसान्द्रममलं		निजबोधरूपं	
	सीतापतिं	विदिततत्त्वमहं	नमामि ॥	

(I. 1. 2)

(Rāma is the supreme soul, the sublime bliss, super existence who permeates the cosmos, creating everything with the help of His *Māyā Śakti* residing in the inmost shrines of all).

x		x		x
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“That very universal soul, the primal power, self-effulgent, unique and peerless, who assumes human form with the help of His *Māyā* for the benefit of the worldly people.”

x		x		x
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“He permeates everything. He is inside and outside of all the *Jīvas* although they bear different forms and names. He appears to be different in the eyes of ignorant people, like the great fire seemingly different in different trees on the ground of their distinct shapes.”

x

x

x

"I salute to Śrī Rāma devotedly, who is the sole cause of the creation, preservation and destruction of the world; who although beyond illusion stoops to create illusion, who is unthinkable, the true conscious bliss, the very self of consciousness and who is the noble lord of Janakanandinī Sītā."

पुरारि गिरिसम्भूता रामार्णवसङ्गता ।
अध्यात्मरामगङ्गेयं पुनातु भुवनत्रयम् ॥

"May this Ganges of the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa*, emanating from the mouth of Lord Śiva and falling into the ocean of Rāma, purify all the three *Lokas*."



If the pride of spirituality enters into you, woe unto you. It is the most awful bondage that ever existed. Neither can wealth nor any other bondage of the human heart bind the soul so much as this. "I am purer than others", is the most awful idea that can enter into the human heart. In what sense are you pure? The God in you is the God in all. If you have not known this, you have known nothing. How can there be difference? It is all one. Every being is the temple of the Most High; if you can see that, good, if not, spirituality has yet to come to you.

—Swami Vivekananda

From age to age, God's great enlightened ones come on Earth to awaken our hearts more fully to the reality of His presence and His love. The influence of these divine teachers does not die with their physical passing. Their spiritual help and blessings are ever with those who dwell on their words and their lives, and who strive to live by their teachings.

—Self-Realization

Spiritual Sleep

—Subhash Lakhotia

The purpose of 'Sleep' for every human being is to get relaxation and rest so that one who wakes up after a sleep is charged with fresh energy and strength. People try to take a long deep sleep of long hours so that they may get more freshness and more relaxation. It has also come to notice that many a times even by taking a long sleep one does not feel fresh.

Well, to enjoy the bliss of sleep and to get freshness after even a small sleep a person should resort to 'Spiritual Sleep.' What then this spiritual sleep is? It is this 'Spiritual Sleep' by which you can get freshness and complete rejuvenation of your body by taking a very small dose of sleep. A person might feel, that how is it possible to have more relaxation and freshness with little sleep. Generally speaking, the common answer would be that 'no' it is not possible to have more relaxation and freshness with less quantity of sleep. But relaxation becomes a reality even with small quantity only when it is a 'Spiritual Sleep'. What then is this concept of 'Spiritual Sleep' which guarantees to provide so much great relaxation, freshness and a vibrant bubbling enthusiasm with so little sleep. To enjoy the bliss or spiritual bliss all you have to do is to lie down calmly and coolly in any posture or direction that makes you comfortable. Now gently close your eyes. Do ensure that the eyes are closed not too very tightly. Now just utter the

name of any God on whom you have faith. Now you are ready to take your 'Spiritual Sleep' for better and fast relaxation and all round freshness. Now from the screen of your mind you just shut the door for all thoughts. Yes, all thoughts, may the thoughts that are coming in your mind are good or bad or the thoughts which are coming in your mind might bring lullness in your mind or these thoughts might bring some good business idea to result into more money making for you or the thoughts might come in your mind which might result into thinking about long agenda of your pending work but still if you want to enjoy the bliss of your spiritual sleep then it is absolutely a must for some time to close the gate of your mind for various good or bad thoughts which are coming to your mind. In the initial years of practice of spiritual sleep if you find that you are not in a position to control your thought making process in your mind then what all you have to do is just to close the eyes and to close the mouth and then after closing the mouth tightly now to shout and scold the mind that dear mind please stop for just some time the thought making process. Do ensure when you do so you scold the mind with a loud voice without opening the mouth whereby you shout and scold the mind but no voice is uttered from your mouth thereby resulting into a *Mānasika jaya* type of a situation. So now the gate of thought making process of the mind are closed, yes completely closed. Now you are ready to enjoy your spiritual sleep. You will now find that as the thought making process has suddenly stopped by the mind your mind becomes motionless. Now with your closed eyes you just thinking about your own self, the inner real self, you will soon start experiencing that you are in some other world, where there is peace and peace all round, you cannot experience sorrow, grief or tension. It is your this state of mind which is known as 'Spiritual Sleep'. You will

start feeling instant relaxation, a great mental peace and above all unspeakable joy. All these advantages while you are enjoying your 'Spiritual Bliss'. The next question that might arise in your mind is as to how long should be the duration of this 'Spiritual Bliss'. The timing or the duration of spiritual sleep is not the main point to ponder about. What is relevant is that you should be in such state of sleep where after shutting down the gate of your thoughts you are dreaming with just one single companion and that is your own 'Self'. Even if you are in 'Spiritual Sleep' for just 10 to 15 minutes and you wake up you will find the beneficial results of Spiritual Sleep being showered on you in the form of a special glow on your face, a real relaxation and a getting go of your fatigue. All these are made possible even by a small dose of 'Spiritual Sleep'. Once you start practising Spiritual Sleep you will soon be getting long hours of Spiritual Sleep and that too without making any effort on your part.

After few sessions of spiritual sleep you will even be able to talk during the spiritual Sleep with your *Ātmā* i.e., the soul. A talk or a chat with your own inner self resulting into direct union with *Ātmā* would even bring to you even some of the solutions to certain complex problems of life for which you have not been able to get an answer. The beneficial effects of 'Spiritual Sleep' are so very great that a number of our Indian saints have been practising this Spiritual Sleep which took them to the stage of *Samādhi*. For a normal human being engrossed in worldly affairs the regular practice of Spiritual Sleep would result into instant calmness of mind, control of anger, and would bring home all round bliss, cheerfulness, happiness, freshness and finally vigour and strength to fight the worldly affairs in a more befitting manner. Just start now your practice of Spiritual Sleep and see and experience the beneficial effects

it has in moulding your complete life style. What has been stated above about 'Spiritual Sleep' is based on the personal experience of the author. In the initial stage do not worry about the duration of this Spiritual Sleep as to whether it lasts for few minutes or few hours you just enjoy every bit of it. No effort would even be needed to make you enjoy the spiritual bliss of Spiritual Sleep, it would just happen of its own. All you have to do is to sleep with closed eyes and closed gate of your thought making process and just instantly start enjoying the bliss of 'Spiritual Sleep'.

Note—What has been stated about the 'Spiritual Sleep' which I would like to call *Yoga Nidrā* a departmental term of *Hatha Yoga*, is correct to the letter. Yet it is not easy to rebuke or admonish the mind and make it close its doors for incoming and outgoing thoughts. At a later date and after initially sufficient practice it may be quite easy. But for beginners I would like to suggest an easier even though grosser form of practice. As a matter of fact this is how I started practising *Yoga Nidrā*.

Lie down in *Śavāsana*. This is most convenient posture for this type of sleep, closing your eyes and mouth not very hard, start counting your intaking or outpouring breath without missing any and without moving any of your vocal organs. The counting should be in reverse order such as 100-99-98 and so on. This exercise will allow no room for your mind to do any other thinking, that is the only reason behind that. But this will slowly but steadily bring the mind within control.

When you have had enough practice of this sort to your credit, stop it. Then start concentrating on plexus centres from *Mūlādhāra* to *Sahasrāra* with their respective forms and functions and vice-versa.

When you have mastered this technique also, I think

you will not require any effort to go into deep spiritual slumber. Surely 10 minutes sleep of this type will rejuvenate you more than what you get from 8 hour's deep and undisturbed slumber.

—Editor



"Darkness and light are the names of the various degrees of intensity of light. It is darkness in the night for man, but not so for a cat or a tiger.

Similarly, weakness and strength are also the different names of the energy in a man. The terms folly and intelligence, or ignorance and learning are also not contradictory. A young child of five years may be called ignorant, but when he takes his M. A. degree at the age of twenty or so, he is called a learned man. Even this degree holder of M. A. will be considered less learned, as compared with the man who has obtained Doctorate in the same subject. Similarly, *Vedānta* teaches that all are equal, so far as their real Self is concerned. The seeming differences are not real. One who considers himself to be learned today, was also an ignorant fool in his childhood. So, too, when you see a fool, consider him to be your own self of childhood. Only his body has developed but not his mind so far. Mentally, he is still a child as you were, when you were a child. So, why hate him? He may also be intelligent one day like you, when his mind may be developed. Similarly, there are different stages in the process of Evolution. Do not call any man good or bad. They are all alike from the spiritual point of view, irrespective of their seeming differences due to their different stages of Evolution. Only see this underlying unity and enjoy your oneness with all, the All.

—Swami Rama Tirtha

Religious Sinfulness

—Shree Bhaisab

Q. Religion, religious people and religious organisations have lost much of their respect in society as a whole. How came? How to restore religion to its respectful place in society?

A. Religious people alone can restore to religion its rightful place in society by their own conduct and character. Most of us—religious people turn out to be self-seeking in practical life and thoughtless or others. The words and deeds of preceptors and preachers do not generally go together. All this degrades religion in the eyes of the people.

If we are religious, we must then act true to the tenets of our creed. If we act opposite or differently, we earn the sin of degrading religion in the eyes of others.

Religion tells us to be kind to all under all circumstances. A person goes to a famous temple to have *Darśana*—a glimpse of the deities there. The temple closes its doors at 12 O' clock. He has got to be there by that time or else he will forego the *Darśana*. On the way, an old and ailing woman stands in his way stretching her hand for alms. He pushes her aside with an angry jerk and succeeds to reach the shrine in time.

In the temple, he is able to get *Darśana* by dint of money. There are people who cannot or do not want to pay. They keep helplessly waiting. He gets *Darśana* at their cost.

Obviously, he has trampled heavily on the spirit of

religion. Religion does not allow anyone to insult an old man or to take one's turn over others by means of money.

The case in question casts a slur on the fair name of God. The person earns for more sin in the eyes of the Omniscient than His pleasure.

Again, a person calls a congregation for *Kīrtana* or for reading or reciting from a holy book, or a night long keep-awake programme for gaining the grace of a deity, but at home or in profession, he humiliates or exploits his employees, subordinates and workers.

All living-beings are the children of the Great Father. If we hurt them and worship Him, it cannot please Him—it will rather displease Him.

There are other examples from practical, day-to-day, life to show how we denigrate religion through our style of religiosity—

1. Office-bearers of socio-religious organisations practising corruption in business or private life.

2. A wealthy faithful goes to offer money to an affluent saint living in a palatial sanctuary or to a temple. On the way, sit semiclad poor young mothers with babes in arms. The poor folk extend their hand for alms. The 'faithful' feels annoyed and rebukes them to 'go to hell' as they were "standing in the way of his religious act!"

3. Many religious passengers in trains and buses resolutely refuse to shift their luggage from the berths while an ailing old man or a young mother with a babe in lap stands tired and helpless by their side. Comfortable in their seats, they keep counting beads on the rosary.

4. So many politicians keep shifting their loyalties, commit all sorts of sins but with great humility and reverence go and bow to saints and sages, seeking the miracle of their blessings.

Many 'godmen' proudly bestow their blessings on such

undeserving folk. These 'godmen' reduce religion to public ridicule!

5. Many in the government departments make money through bribes or other unfair means. They dole out part of it to saints or religious institutions to the latter's grateful appreciation.

6. Nations feeling proud of waging wars and causing bloodshed in the name of God.

7. Many heads of institutions unduly detain their staff or take excessive work from them. They even use loose language and humiliate their employees. At the same time, they claim to be devoutly religious and godfearing!

8. Most of the shopkeepers open their shops in the morning burning incense before the idols or pictures of gods and goddesses. All the day, they sell adulterated goods and undurable imitations, fooling and fleecing the needy or fond customers. They make all possible assurances before sale but turn insultingly indifferent to complaints immediately after!

9. Most of the taxi-drivers hang pictures of deities in their vehicles. Right in front of them, they overcharge the helpless passengers—perhaps guests in their city. When a victim protests, they come down heavily on him.

10. Many physicians overcharge patients or even prolong cases. A placard in the clinic reads, "I treat, He cures!"

11. Some 'religious' lawyers lose the cases of their clients to the opposite party after accepting more money furtively from it!

12. A coloniser; out and out dishonest in property-deals, goes about broadcasting his faith in God.

13. A business man makes a pilgrimage to the Divine Mother, but at home insults his own mother—an aged, ailing, widow. She is now thought a burden on the family-budget. The mother at home is the living form of the

Universal Mother! Humiliating her is humiliating Her.

14. A *Seṭha* took younger brother into his flourishing business. On his untimely heartfailure, the younger brother usurped all the wealth of the late kind brother, thus leaving his family on pins. Soon after, the young new *Seṭha* went on an all India pilgrimage. Back 'home, he tells stories of his faith in the holy cities with pride and pleasure!

All such practices and behaviour as exemplified above are responsible for the degradation of religion and godmen in society.

If we are honest, we can mend our ways and restore religion to its rightful place.

Sender—*Nirmal Gupta*



Time is passing away. Whatever is to be done, must be done at the earliest. Why do you put off the matter? What are the things you require? Under whose pressure are you working? You must not forget the Supreme Deity even for a moment. In the end none will own you except the Lord. There is nothing substantial in this ephemeral world. Everything in the unsubstantial world is the witchcraft of the illusion (*Māyā*). Knowing this the wise man is not caught into its mesh but he who is ignorant about this fact is tempted to face at the cereal like worldly enjoyment is ensnared by *Māyā*, the enchantress, in the snares of fond attachment.

—*Jayadaya! Goyandka*

Individual mind is a wave of the Cosmic Mind. Thus one can allow his mind to tune itself with the Cosmic Mind by rising beyond the limitations caused by ignorance and egoism. In so doing, he can draw unimaginable energy from the Cosmic Source and effect wondrous changes in the world of matter.

—*Swami Jyotirmayananda*

Exemplary Mode of Teaching

—V. N. Sharma

Some devotees of God only like to see Him in their meditation; some others like to see Him through concentration of mind or repetition of His name incessantly; some others like to fix their mind on idol worship and like to see God through idolatry while still others discard all these ways and want to see God face to face through all animate and inanimate objects. They are never satisfied with imaginary visions of God. One such great devotee is Swāmī Rāma Tīrtha who saw God in everything, everywhere and in every man. This is not a mere fiction about him but a statement full of truth. When he was Reader and Professor of mathematics his colleagues and students observed thus—“He takes his pupil as his God Kṛṣṇa. He teaches him with reverence, with apologies. He knows, his God knows everything; it is his pleasure that he has asked him to teach. His reverence for the child of man is infinite. He calls him God. “That thou art *Tattvamasi*.”

While teaching in the Minion College Lahore, he would address every student of his class, “O Kṛṣṇa beloved! You know everything; what is it that I am to teach you? If a boy pleaded ignorance, he would repeat, “O Kṛṣṇa beloved! You know all.” He would then inspire the boy with the solution of the problem who would come and then do it on the blackboard with ease.

His realization of God in boys of his college was not limited only to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the eternal child. He went even

farther in this direction of his realization. He felt the same thing about child christ the child Prophet and about himself. He truly spelt out and practised the Vedantic theory of *Sarva Dharma Samabhāva* and omnipresence of God.

One day Swāmī Rāma Tīrtha went and stood before Dr. Ewing, the Principal of Lahore Mission college and said—
 “You ! You worship Christ! Have you seen him with your eyes? No! You have not seen him. Look! Look! Ewing
 “Christ is standing before you.”

“From humble, pure, poor student, he rose into a full statured man, roseate with the dawn of Cosmic Consciousness in him and a man of deep concentration, wonderful vivaciousness irrepressible laughter, bubbling with joy, lofty in his visions light and racy in his gait.”

Rāma's this way of teaching and his behaviour with students in the class carries us to the chapters of modern methodology of teaching and the behaviour of a teacher with his taught. Rāma practised the latest theory of teaching at a time when the definite crude rule, “Spare the rod and spoil the child” was prevalent and severe corporal punishment in teaching were justified on the part of teachers. Rāma Tīrtha as Professor and Reader stands for an ideal teacher in the series of Indian teachers.

Swāmī Rāma had realised this truth in the heart of his heart at a very early stage of his life that every child or student has come to attend school in the form of God Himself like child Kṛṣṇa in the *Gurukula* of Sandīpani and therefore, he should not be ill-treated, insulted, humiliated or chidden by the teacher while being taught. It was because of this background that he taught his students with reverence and love and enabled them to solve their problem themselves. He believed that still children of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Lord Buddha and Lord Christ are getting education in our schools of today to become Lord Kṛṣṇa, Lord Buddha and Lord Christ again

to shower their nectarean bliss on the hemispheres.

Swāmī Rāma was a God-realized soul. He knew very well that even God incarnates on Indian soil in the form of child Rāma and child Kṛṣṇa to play and to get education in the schools of spiritual preceptors like Sandīpani of Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh, the very heart of India. Realising this truth, he offered the best possible behaviour to the students of his college. The teachers of today are required to follow his example.



To kill others one must be equipped with swords and shields, but to commit suicide a needle is sufficient; so to teach others, much intellect and learning are necessary, but not so for your own self-illumination." Are you pure? If you are pure, you will reach God. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

—Swami Vivekananda

असूर्या नाम ते लोका अन्धेन तमसावृताः।
तांस्ते प्रेत्याभिगच्छन्ति ये के चात्महनो जनाः।

"Those worlds are sunless and enveloped in blinding darkness, to which all those people who are slayers of their own souls go after departing from here."

—Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad

The more sweetening you put in water, the sweeter it becomes. Likewise, the longer you meditate intensely, the greater will be your spiritual advancement.....Remember that the longer you practise, with intensity, the nearer you will be to joyous contact with the silent God. Intensity consists in making today's meditation deeper than yesterday's meditation, and tomorrow's deeper than today's!

—Self-Realization

How to Receive Guru's Grace

—Swami Chidananda

We have been told by our scriptures that *Guru-Kṛpā* is a wonderful, mysterious factor that will enable the aspirants to seek and to attain the *summum bonum* of life, Self-realisation, *Darśana* of God, or *Mokṣa*. Whether the disciple does *Sādhana* or not. Whether one is deserving or undeserving, *Guru-Kṛpā* sets aside all normal laws that operate in the spiritual plane and takes one to transcendental bliss. If we are to believe the scriptures, we should say that there is nothing except *Guru-Kṛpā* needed for us to attain perfection in life.

If it is also true that the *Guru* is an infinite ocean of mercy, that his *Kṛpā* ever showers upon all seekers whether they are worthy or unworthy, whether they are qualified or not, then by this time we should all be *Āpta-kāmas*, full of Bliss. Is that so? No, We find very much to our vexation that we are caught up; ignorance is there; illusion is there; we are deceived at every turn by our own lower self.

Wherein lies the defect? If both the above statements are true and yet disciples are still very much earthbound, something else must be wrong. What is that something else? We don't have the temerity to say that the scriptures are untrue. At the same time, we do not assert that the *Guru* is not compassionate, that the *Guru* does not shower his *Kṛpā* upon us.

If we reflect upon this, some factors come up before us which are worthy of serious consideration. *Guru-kṛpā*

is undeniably a divine force that can turn even a stone into the infinite *Saccidānanda*, let alone a conscious being. There is absolutely not the least bit of exaggeration in the statement and the fact that the *Guru* is always gracious. But then, *Guru-kṛpā* has not only to be bestowed, not only to be given, but it has also to be received. In receiving it, we immortalise ourselves, divinise ourselves.

Unlimited charity may be bestowed by a generous-hearted donor who calls upon all who are in need to come and take. But not all the wealth of the world will be of any avail to an indigent one if he will not avail himself of this great opportunity and become a receiver. And therefore it is that the great Jesus said: "Seek and it shall be found; knock and it shall open unto you; ask and it shall be given." It is not as though there is any dearth of divine munificence, divine grace or *Guru-kṛpā*. Light is not lacking, but then there is a Law that we have to ask, we have to seek and we have to knock, and having done it we must be ready to receive. If this is present, then *Guru-kṛpā* works all wonders; it will flow into us and raise us to the highest realm of immortality eternal light and infinite bliss.

But then, how can we receive it? How should we conduct ourselves if we are to be ready to receive this grace? By discipleship. For, the question of *Guru* and *Guru-kṛpā* arises only for the disciple. For those who are not of the category named disciple, it is said that mercy, compassion, grace and *Āśīrvāda* will be given, but not *Guru-kṛpā*. When I say *Guru-kṛpā*, it is something special, something mysterious, something that bestows not anything merely of this earth, but gives the highest thing which human life is here for. A devotee may get the blessings of a saint, the grace of a saint. He may also be blessed and partake of the power of his compassion; but, for the attainment of the gift of

Guru-kṛpā, we have first to be disciples.

How is it that one may be a disciple? It is not the *Guru* that accepts the disciple, but the disciple has to first accept the *Guru*. The disciple first of all has to render himself a *Śiṣya*. Then he becomes deserving of and a rightful claimant to *Guru-kṛpā*. It is immaterial whether the *Guru* says "Yes, you are my *Śiṣya*" or not.

Inasmuch as *Guru-kṛpā* takes us to the highest state, discipleship is qualifying ourselves to attain that highest state or the realisation of ourselves as *Saccidānanda*. Therefore, first of all, we have to feel that our present state as *jīva*—spirit enmeshed in a very agonising cage of flesh and bone—is something which is not part of our real nature, is something undesirable, something which we have to get rid of so that then we shall have peace and happiness.

Let us reflect and analyse: how many of us have got this feeling? How many sincerely wish to break out of this cage? If we have this feeling, then we are trying to grow into discipleship. Then we can approach the Freed One, for the *Guru* is the Freed One and one capable of freeing also. Then we can approach this Freed One and pray to him: "Oh, free us from this body." This prayer may not be expressed or articulated; but it must be recited from the innermost core of our being every moment of our life. Then alone can we expect *Guru-kṛpā*. If this pain and agony are not there, it is worthwhile trying to generate them. But such is the covering veil of dark *Māyā* that we are perfectly satisfied with our position.

To feel the necessity of *Mukti*, Freedom, Divine Consciousness, of the higher Spiritual Life, we should resort to *Satsaṅga* to study of scriptures; and we should paint vividly before our mental eye the wretchedness of human life on earth. These things will generate *Mumukṣutwa* (desire for liberation). *Mumukṣutwa* is the first step if we

have even to think of *Guru-kṛpā*.

Then we have to serve the *Guru*. Service is that mysterious something which pulls down the barrier that stands between us and the influence of *Guru-kṛpā*. Ego is the greatest barrier. Our old self-conceit and preconceived notions form a formidable second barrier. For all of this, service is the effective barrier-breaker.

What is the service of the *Guru*? Service of the *Guru* is to try our level best to carry out his *Upadeśa*, carry out the teachings of the *Guru*. Upon his sublime instructions we have to mould our life. We should also try to mould ourselves into that pattern of which he himself is a visible ideal. The secret of carrying out the instructions of the *Guru* to our humble best is a willing obedience in spirit. That is the most important thing. Readiness to bow completely down to the earth. Accept him as the leader and obey him. This obedience should be assiduously cultivated, for every aspect of our old nature, of our lower nature, our mental part, our *Indriyas*, *Antaḥkaraṇa*, tries to see that we are prevented from developing this obedience in spirit; every time we move towards this attitude of obedience, the prompting will come from our old habit, from our preconceived notions: "Let us go the way in which we have been accustomed." This instinct of ages has to be overcome and broken down.

There must be joy in obedience to the *Guru*; and there should be a real craving in the spirit that "I should obey." To be a disciple you should obey even in dream; the idea of doing anything which is contrary to the spirit of the *Guru's* instructions should never arise in our consciousness. Day and night our *Sādhana* should be to cultivate this attitude to perfection. If this is done, we are sufficiently on the way to qualify ourselves to receive *Guru-kṛpā*. This is the external part of the *Sādhana*.

Inwardly we have also to break down the old set of ideas which somehow or other has crept into us regarding the *Guru*, his grace and its functions. It is a hard task, but it has to be done. Because, to the disciple, the nature of the *Guru* is not human. We should be completely blind to the human side of the *Guru*, and we should be conscious only of the divinity that he is. Then alone will we be able to partake of this *Kṛpā* which will transform us from the lower human into the transcendental divine. Our relationship with the *Guru* is purely divine, purely spiritual, and as long as we have not completely rubbed out the last vestige of human relationship with the *Guru*, we shall not be able to enter into the divine spiritual relationship with him.

Being our *Guru* we expect that he should relieve us of small troubles, bodily ills, financial difficulties, domestic problems, little paltry matters of this earthly life. We will get all that if we pray to the *Guru*, but that is all that we will get. That mysterious lofty thing called *Guru-kṛpā* will not flow into us. Therefore, first of all we should try to efface all human relationships with the *Guru*. For that, subjectively we have to work out an inner transformation; until that is done, his divine nature will not become fully revealed to us. As long as we consider ourselves to be human beings, earthly beings, with all the wants, limitations and weaknesses of earthly beings, we cannot fully enter into the awareness of the *Guru* in his absolute, divine essence. Therefore, our *Sādhana* should be to generate divine consciousness and shed our human consciousness. If we begin to live here as divine beings with a divine destiny, then gradually the *Guru-kṛpā* and the divine aspect of the *Guru* will begin to manifest, and we shall begin to partake of the *Guru-kṛpā*.

We have to make the start. From the very beginning to the very climax, all has to be got from the divine source.

Until we make ourselves fit and generate the divine consciousness that we are not human beings, but we are souls in bondage—who only need a little transforming touch of *Guru-kṛpā*—we will not be able to fully make use of the *Guru* as the divine being.

To illustrate this point: A prince, who has lost his heritage and does not know that he is a prince, happens, in his wanderings, to stand before his father's palace, being cowed down in the consciousness of a beggar. What is the maximum he will ask? He will ask: "Give me shelter for the night; give me food for the day." And that is what he will get. Supposing this very prince is made to realise: you are the heir to the kingdom, then he will demand the whole kingdom. He will not demand food and shelter only.

Similarly, we have first of all to develop in us the consciousness that we are immortal beings, we are in essence *Sacchidānanda*. Then we can demand that *Sacchidānanda* consciousness from the *Guru* and the *Guru* will be able to give.

Finally, we have to take into consideration one more factor. Even if someone were to tell the prince that he is a prince, and he is to go to his father and demand the heritage, perhaps he is a minor. The king may say: "All right, give him a palace, and he will become entitled to his heritage, the kingdom, when he attains majority." Even so, there may be certain inner qualifications which are necessary for the full and effective reception of divine grace; until they are attained by the disciple, he will have to wait. Therefore, even after having seemingly attained all the qualifications of the ideal disciple, we have to wait in humility and in patience. We cannot arrogate to ourselves a perfection which is only visible to the discerning vision of a divine sight. Patience and humility in the spiritual realm may have to extend over a period of decades. We have to

wait like a dog at the doorstep of the *Guru* for a whole lifetime if need be. There is no loss here, for the goal is immortal life, freedom.

If we have become willing servants and willing, obedient disciples, then it is the natural law that *Guru-kṛpā* will flow into us unasked. But, let us not commit the mistake of dictating to the *Guru* how his *Kṛpā* should flow into us. For we have within ourselves desires, our own ideas of what is good and bad, what is pleasant and unpleasant, desirable and undesirable; and we want *Guru-kṛpā* to conveniently adjust and adapt itself to our needs and fancies. *Guru-kṛpā* may come in an unpleasant form. It may come in the form of a series of disappointments. We may think that the *Guru* has not bestowed his *Kṛpā* upon us; but that disappointment itself will be his *Kṛpā*. Many things may be seemingly good and pleasant, but it may be hurtful to our spirit, and that the *Guru* alone can perceive and judge. As a fond, careful mother, he may deny us that desire. But it will be the greatest manifestation of *Guru-kṛpā*, meant to remove all the obstacles and dangers that are in our path, and to take us nearer and nearer to the consciousness of *Sacchidānanda*. We are not fit to judge whether we are ready to receive *Guru-kṛpā* or not and what form it should take.

The best thing is to humbly leave everything to the *Guru*: "I do not know whether I am a disciple or not. Therefore, O Ocean of Mercy and Compassion, pray make me a proper disciple. Generate in me that *Mumukṣutwa* that makes me a disciple, and give me the spirit of willing obedience. Help me in trying to follow thy instructions. Help me in trying to mould myself upon the pattern set up by thee." This must be our constant prayer. And by this alone shall we be able to draw the *Kṛpā* of our *Guru* and make our life fruitful. And the perfect way of praying is trying our best to be a real disciple.



Read and Digest

One night, I had a dream. I was walking along the beach with God, and across the skies flashed scenes from my life. In each scene I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand to my surprise, I noticed that many times, along the path of my life, there was only one set of footprints, and I noticed that it was at the lowest and saddest times in my life. I asked God about it. "God! You said that once I decided to follow you, You would walk with me all the way. But I notice that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why you left my side when I needed you most. God said—"My precious child, I never left you during your time of trial. Wherever you see only one set of footprints I was carrying you."

—Gauranga

Look at the lamp. Why is the light coming out of it? Because the chimney, which is its body, is quite clean and transparent. It is due to this that its inner light is coming out without any obstruction. In the same way, if you also remove the ideas of selfishness, darkness and obscurity from your heart, your inner light will also come out automatically and spread all around.

—Swami Rama Tirtha



The Sage of Pandrimalai

—R. Ramdas Thampuran

Many saints have traversed this spiritually fertile soil of India. Numerous instances have been recorded in the history showing how people were benefited by the association of these Godheads. God incarnates in this world, time and again, in the form of saints to redeem the sinner and to nourish the poor; to point the way to self-realization and to uplift *Dharma*, seeking nothing for themselves in return. Like a huge perennial reservoir they provide cool and nourishing drink to those who are scorched by the heat of *Samsāra*. One such *Mahātmā* was Śrī-la-Śrī Pandrimalai Swāmigal.

Śrī-la-Śrī-Pandrimalai Swāmigal was born in Pandrimalai village, near Madurai in South India. The exact date of his birth is not known. His parents were Śrī Ārumugan Pillai and Śrīmatī Aṅgammāl. Swāmigal was named Rāmasamy at birth. Right since childhood there were many occurrences in Rāmū's life (Rāmasāmy's pet name) predicting the divine manifest in the infant prodigy. Many times to the surprise of the parents they found the cradle filled with fragrance of flowers and the child smeared with *Vibhūti* and *Kumkuma* on its forehead. The parents too noticed divine insignias on the body of the child. On Rāmū's palm were the holy marks of conch, wheel, *Jñāna vel*, *Ṣaṭakoṇam*, *Śakti vel*, flag of lord Muruga and the trident of Lord Śiva. These auspicious marks proved the child's incarnate divinity.

Rāmū had his formal education in Balasamudram (near palani hills) under the tutelage of Śrī Gaṇapati Vatair, who was running an elementary school there. His schooling lasted only for a few years during which he learnt the Tamil scriptures. By nature Rāmū was God-centred. He had profound love and devotion to Lord Muruga of Palani and would visit the temple whenever possible. At Balasamudram village, Rāmū had the opportunity to a saint named Salli Samiyar, by whose grace Rāmū could add momentum to his spiritual pursuit.

On another occasion, while Rāmū and his friends were visiting a nearby Vināyaka temple they came across an old man, who asked Rāmū to buy Gānjā for him. Rāmū ran to the nearest shop and brought it. The old man asked Rāmū to open his mouth and show his tongue. He smeared sacred ash on Rāmū's tongue and wrote esoteric words with a spear. The old man rubbed sacred ash on Rāmū's body and then blessed him. Rāmū's friends were frightened and ran to fetch their elders. On their arrival and enquiry about the old man, Rāmū pointed to the Vināyaka temple. The old man appeared to have disappeared into the temple. God's grace had descended on Rāmū. Rāmū could exhibit unlimited psychic powers. Stones turned into sugar candy and sand became sugar, at his very touch. He played with snakes like toys. He would cure diseases and also drive away evil spirits troubling others.

Young Rāmū could not understand for himself, how he would perform miracles and of the great psychic powers that were manifesting in him. Rāmū became more God centred. He left his schooling and wandered in search of *Sādhus*, who could help him in his future *Sādhanā*. During this course of time, Rāmū visited many temples.

One day on his visit to the Palani temple, he met a saint named Chatti Swāmigal. Chatti Swāmigal initiated Rāmū

by giving him a puissant *Mantra*. He instructed Rāmū to fetch a pot filled with water and plant a bunch of neem leaves in it and asked him to chant the *Mantra* for a period of 108 days.

After the initiation Rāmū went home and underwent *Tapas* as instructed. During the course of *Sādhana*, Rāmū had a vision and frightened of which he stopped the *Pūjā* for sometime. Rāmū in order to seek advice, went in search of his *Guru* but unfortunately Chattī Swāmigal had left Palani by then. Then with a steadfast mind and with the encouragement of his grand-mother, Rāmū continued the *Pūjā* for 108 days as prescribed by his *Guru*. On the final day, Rāmū had a vision of Mother *Parāśakti* and Lord Muruga.

Young Rāmū felt that he had a lot more to learn. He wanted to experience truth. By god's grace a saint named Achandarmalai Paradesi, a great *Yogī*, arrived in his village. Rāmū along with this saint left home to explore the frontiers of knowledge. Rāmū spent his time during this period, by serving his master and learning at his feet. In course of time, Rāmū experienced *Satchitānanda*. The great saint having now found that Rāmū had nothing more to learn, brought Rāmū back to his native village and left Balasamudram without even bidding farewell to him.

After sometime Rāmū left Balasamudram and returned to Pandrimalai to stay with his parents. His parents decided to get Rāmū married to Selvi Papatti Ammal. Rāmū felt that leading the life of a householder (*Grhastha*) and performing one's duties superior than the life of a *Sannyāsin*. The marriage took place.

When the flower blossoms, bees come of their own accord. So too people began to throng Swāmigal for solace and blessings. Swāmigal left an indelible impress on all those who came to meet him. People began to hail him

as 'Pandrimalai Swāmigal'. Swāmigal was a standing example to all that one can remain in the family and still live a life of a *Jīvan mukta*. He considered service to humanity as his duty.

Swāmigal shifted his residence and came to Dindigul—a small town in Madurai district, for the convenience of his disciples and devotees. Swāmigal alongwith his holy consort toured all over India, Ceylon and Malayasia. Many people had the opportunity to meet Swāmigal and many miracles happened in their lives. Soon after the tour, the holy Mother attained the lotus feet of god after a brief illness. To prove that the holy Mother was divine, the holy ashes turned to *Kumkuma* and turmeric before immersion in the holy waters of India.

Later, on the request of his devotees Swāmigal came to reside at Madras. An *Āśrama* named *Om Namaḥśivam* was established in Madras. Swāmigal's life was one of ceaseless service to humanity. There was no paraphernalia to declare him a saint or a sage. He was a standing example of perfect humility even though endowed with every kind of knowledge. Another remarkable trait of Swāmigal was his catholicity of outlook and universal approach. Swāmigal says—"Attainment of the state of perfection and realisation to the lord Almighty is possible for an aspirant by seeking and learning from a self-realised *Guru* and by means of ceaseless effort on the part of the aspirant. To earn God's grace, devotion to work and duty is necessary resulting in *Citta Śuddhi* (purity of mind). When the mind becomes pure, one gets *Viveka* (discrimination) and *Vairāgya* (dispassion) its other offshoots being *Satsaṅga*, *Sādhu Sevā*, *Nāma Saṅkīrtana* and *Satya* or *Sanmārga* (Path of truth) all of which result in the upsurge of *Bhakti* or boundless devotion to God and attainment of *Siddhis* or divine power. This in turn leads to *Mukti* or liberation. Man in his liberated

state realise *Ātman* which is none else than the Almighty Lord. Verily such a perfected person sheds all human limitations and transcends good and evil, the pairs of opposites. Love will radiate from him in all its effulgence, inside and outside. He becomes a perfect instrument of God and sees him in all and all in him."

Swāmigal consecrated two temples, one in Newyork and the other in Pittsbury of North America. As everything has to come to an end at sometime or the other, Swāmigal attained *Mahāsamādhi* at Madras on Dec. 11th 1986. Swāmigal's mission is still being continued by his son and grandson Śrī-la-Śrī-Śaktivādivel Swāmigal at Madras.



Faith can work miracles, faith can work wonders, faith can move mountains, faith can reach a realm where reason dare not enter. There is nothing impossible under the sun for the man of faith to accomplish. Therefore have absolute and unshakable faith in God, in the power of *Rāma Nāma*, in the *Vedas* and the scriptures and in the teachings of your *Guru* and last but not least in your own self. This is the master key for success in life and god-realisation, or attainment of divine consciousness.

—Swami Sivananda

When you have the impulse to befriend others, it is the presence of God that you feel. Friendship is a divine impulse. God is not satisfied to look after His human children only in the guise of parents and other relatives. He comes as friends to give us opportunities to express unconditional love from our hearts.

—Man's Eternal Quest

A Supplication

—R. P. Dwivedi

[I]

Vaster than immense universe around us,
And deeper than oceans that surround us;
Thou art indeed One, yet known as many;
Thy ways though simple, yet seem uncanny.

[II]

Thou art effulgent—the light of light
Fountain of all existence—the life of life;
Our inner impulse, the impelling force;
That guides and directs our life's course.

[III]

Nature reflects thy eternal presence;
The world abounds in thy loving beneficence
Dispenser of our destiny, thou controlest our life
And givest us strength to face all strife.

[IV]

Pray make us all truthful and brave
Polite but firm, strong yet suave;
Fill us with hope, courage and fortitude,
To serve the poor, deprived and destitute.

[V]

May we lift those who are sunk in sorrow
And help them greet a happier morrow;
May we mitigate men's myriad sufferings
By tender care and humble offerings.



Bhakti and Japa

—Kripala Rao Marupaka

Bhakti is the pre-requisite to *Japa* or *Japa Yogī* one who performs *Japa* and *Sandhyā-Vandana* as part of life. It cannot be conceived about *Bhakti* without *Japa* or *Japa* without *Bhakti*, in other words a staunch *Bhakta* is invariably a steadfast *Bhakta*. So to say *Bhakti* and *Japa* are the two sides of a precious coin. Hence we can surmise without an iota of hesitation that *Bhakti* is the only easy and simple way to reach God-head. According to Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara *Swaswarūpānusandhānam Bhaktiḥ*.

Śrī Bāla Gaṅgādhara Tilaka in his commentary on *Gītā* opined that irrespective of one's belief in either Śiva or Viṣṇu or otherwise any symbolic worship, if the *Bhakta* firmly believes that the omnipresent and omnipotent *Paramēśvara* is one and the same, then it amounts to *Vyaktopāsanā* or *Śuddha Bhakti*. The *Bhakti* is generally classified into *Saguṇa Sākāra Bhakti* and *Nirguṇa Nirākāra Bhakti*. Hence the innumerable idol worshipping with its paraphernalia, all encompassed in the pantheon of *Hindu Dharma* is *Saguṇa Bhakti* and worshipping the Immutable, Nameless, Formless *Parāśakti* and as well as firmly believing the great and potent *Praṇava Mantra* as symbolic of the *Para Brahma* is also construed as *Bhakti*. According to Śruti—“एकं सद्भिर्वा बहुधा वदन्ति” (I. 164. 46). *Nirākāra Bhakti* is eulogised in the following *Śloka* of *Maitreya upaniṣad* of *Sāmaveda*, which advocates worshipping one's own

Ātmā (soul).

पाषाणलौहमणिमृण्मयविग्रहेषु पूजा पुनर्जननभोगकरी मुमुक्षोः ।

तस्माद्यतेः स्वहृदयार्चनमेव कुर्याद्वाह्यार्चनं परिहरेदपुनर्भवाय ॥

(II. 26)

One should shun the worshipping of Idols made of stones, metals, clay or any precious stone by indulging so, one is caught in the web of rebirth—*Punarjanma*. Hence the *Yatī* who cherishes to put an end to the cycle of rebirth (*Janma Rāhitya*) and thereby sincerely wishes to have *Kaivalyam* should and must worship the only eternal *Ātmā* (His own soul), which pervades in his body alone.

Śrī Aurobindo Yogī opined that Eastern Philosophy was not only a view of life but a way of life as well and religion is not the personal property of an individual or any institution whatsoever, but a science of perfect living whereby the society can learn to live peacefully and fully for the Aryans who were the most practical of men. Anybody and everybody with grit and steadfast determination can perform *Japa* as easily as one breathes day in and day out. A *Jāpaka* must wake up in the early hours and after taking cold water bath and oblation should sit in an airy room, must be invariably calm and strictly instructing no one to disturb, sit on a mat, skin of any animal or a clean piece of cloth, with a *Mālā* of 108 beads of his choice and start *Japa* of his *Iṣṭa Devatā* facing him. Preferably gaze at the charming and glazing face of the Lord, gradually bring down the sight to the chest position where the *Lakṣmī* is seated, then Naval region, legs and lotus feet of the Almighty. Then gradually raise the gaze up from feet and legs, body and to the *Mugdha Mohana Rūpa*—charming, a face of the Almighty.

Then close the eyes and feel his presence within thyself and try to visualise the name and fame of the Lord exactly in the picture. The visualisation must start in your heart

of the heart commonly known as Love-heart, which is exactly on the right side of the physical heart. If a *Sādhaka* succeeds in gaining mastery in *Japa* in spiritual heart centre the core of meditation, is a perfect one and feel the presence of the Lord everywhere and anywhere in all its mundane and subtle forms nay in formless, bodiless, *Nirguṇa* state of eternal Bliss, the *Sat-Cit-Ānandaghana* state of inexplicable joy and merriment.

Japa is the paramount and pristine glory of the age-old Indian tradition *Sanātana Dharma*. It is classified into 14 types namely *Nitya*, *Naimittika*, *Kāmya*, *Niṣiddha*, *Prāyaścitta*, *Acala*, *Cala*, *Vācika* *Upāṁśu*, *Bhramara*, *Mānasa*, *Ajapā*, *Akhaṇḍa* and *Pradakṣiṇa Japa*; of these the vital *Japas* are briefly mentioned below.

Nitya Japa or daily *Japa* is unique and after getting the *Nārāyaṇa Mantra* or *Śiva Pañcākṣarī Mantra* through *Sadguru* it is chanted as routine in the morn and eve, throughout the life without fail. *Kāmya Japa* also to be initiated by *Guru* through this one's wishes will be fulfilled, but if it is performed with ulterior motive, it may cause danger to the self. *Cala Japa* is the simple one and can be repeated in the mind without any precondition during any given time, even during journey and office hours also.

According to Swāyambhuva Manu, *Mānasa Japa* is the perfect one. Unlike other *Japas* one need not utter the *Mantra* but partially closing the eyelids the *Mantra Devatā* should be instilled in the mind and reach the state of utmost calm and serenity. The spiritual *Guru* of Chatrapati Śivājī venerable Rāmadāsa Swāmī enunciated the great *Rāma Tāraka Mantra* "*Śrī Rāma Jaya Rāma Jaya Jaya Rāma*," which entails the spiritual seeker a paramount bliss.

Late Swāmī Cinmayānanda narrated the *Japa* as a training by which the ever dancing rays of the mind are

compelled to behave in some order and rhythm and bring out of their cooperative effort a single melody of repeated *Mantra* chanting. The *Japa* when performed in a prayer hall or a temple, in all its intensity and training oneself to repeat mentally His names constantly and steadfastly during the wakeful hours are the sure ways of getting *Śuddha Bhakti*.

Swāmī Śivānanda declared unequivocally that the *Japa* fills the mind with Bliss and it attunes the soul to God. It brings about perfect communion with God. Let us emulate these prophetic words of Swāmī Śivānanda *in toto* and make ourselves immortal. Last but not the least for the real *Sādhaka* who performs *Akliṣṭakarma*, *Jñāna-Karma* and *Bhakti* and *Dhyāna* go in unison.

Let noble thoughts come to us go in unison from every side (*Rgveda*).



The ultimate perfection of Love is where that love becomes absolutely divine where it gives because it is its nature to spread happiness, and where it asks nothing for itself, but seeks only that others should be glad.

—*Divine Rays*

Your past mistakes do not matter. But to continue in those mistakes is the greatest sin against yourself, for when you do wrong it deprives you of true happiness. You have the power to hurt yourself or to benefit yourself.....If you do not choose to be happy no one can make you happy. Do not blame God for that ! And if you choose to be happy, no one can make you unhappy.....It is we who make of life what it is.

—*Journey to Self-realization*

A Story

A *Brāhmaṇa* met a *Samnyāsī* and both had a long talk on worldly and religious topics. At last the *Samnyāsī* said to the *Brāhmaṇa*: "Behold child, there is no depending upon anyone in this world. None whom you call your own is yours." The *Brāhmaṇa* would not believe it. How could he think that those for whom he was toiling day and night, that is, the members of his own family, were not his friends on whom he could count for help? So the *Brāhmaṇa* said: "Sir, when I am troubled with even a slight headache, my mother is so much concerned that she is ready to give up even her life gladly if it will only bring relief to me. That such a mother is not a friend whom I can depend upon, is something I cannot conceive." The *Samnyāsī* replied; "If such be the case, then of course she is a friend. But, to tell you the truth, you are greatly mistaken. Never believe for a moment that your mother, wife and son will sacrifice their lives for your sake. You can verify the truth of this if you like; go home and feign excruciating pain in your stomach and groan with it; I will come and show you some fun."

The *Brāhmaṇa* acted accordingly. Physicians were called in, but no one could afford any relief. The mother of the patient was sighing and sorrowing; the wife and children were crying. The *Samnyāsī* turned up at this moment.

"The disease is of a serious nature," said the *Samnyāsī* "and I do not see any chance of the patient's recovery unless someone comes forward to give up his or her life for the

sake of the patient." At this, all of them looked aghast. The *Samnyāsī*, addressing the old mother of the patient, said: "To live or to die will be the same thing to you, if in your old age you love your son who earns for himself and for you all. If you can give your life in exchange for his, I can save your son. If you, as his mother, cannot make this sacrifice for him, who else in this world will care to do it?"

The old woman blabbered forth through her tears: "Revered father, I am ready to do anything you order for the sake of my son. But the thing is, my own life.....and what is my life in comparison to that of my son? The thought—what will become of my little ones after my death—makes me a coward. Unfortunate that I am, these little ones are in my way."

While listening to this dialogue between the *Samnyāsī* and the mother-in-law, the wife of the patient wept bitterly and said, addressing her own parents, "For your sake, dear father and mother, I cannot make the sacrifice." The *Samnyāsī* turned to her and asked her whether she would not sacrifice her life for the sake of her husband, now that his mother had fallen back. The wife said: "The wretch that I am! If widowhood is to be my lot, be it so. I cannot make up my mind to cause grief to my father and mother for the loss of their child." In this way everyone wriggled out of the difficulty. Then the *Samnyāsī* told the patient: "Look now, no one is ready here to sacrifice a life for you. Do you understand now what I meant by saying that there was no depending upon anybody in this world?" When the *Brāhmaṇa* saw all this, he abandoned his so-called home and followed the *Samnyāsī*.

—Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna



Fresh Air, Pure Water Keep People Healthy

—Mohan Lal Gupta

Since World War II, billions of kilograms of synthetic chemicals have seeped into our global environment—into the food we eat, the water we drink and the air we breathe. There are reported to be more than 1,00,000 man-made chemicals used daily in pharmaceutical, the production of plastics, farming and pesticides. Every year, industries add another 1,000 to the mix of new chemicals. Now-a-days vehicular emissions are the greatest source of polluted air.

And yet, for the most part, we don't see the threat to ourselves. We understand that diminishing habitat threatens wildlife, that air pollution is unpleasant and even dangerous to the weaker members of society, that a lack of uncontaminated water can destroy populations.

In human populations, chemical pollution is thought to be disruptive to reproduction and health. Some scientists believe that chemicals that mimic natural hormones may be interfering with the endocrine (hormone-secreting) system and may be responsible for the rise in breast and ovarian cancer in women, reproductive problems like infertility and low sperm counts and prostate cancer in men. It is also known that, if exposed, some man-made chemicals cause nervous system abnormalities in developing foetuses, and in very young children.

Children born near sources of industrial pollution such

as petroleum refineries, factories and cement works are 20 percent more likely to die of leukaemia or other forms of cancer according to British researchers. Children born within four kilometres of a busy highway or railway also had a high risk of cancer and chances of death. The rate of cancer varied according to just where the children were born and what kind of industry was involved.

Many girls in the world are beginning puberty before the age of ten, much earlier than previously, possibly because of exposure to estrogen in the environment. Environment estrogens occur from the breakdown of chemicals in products ranging from pesticides to plastic wrap. Black girls begin puberty shortly before the age of nine. Environmental products such as plastics, hair-care items and insecticides could be causing this trend.

The Indian capital, Delhi is the world's fourth most polluted city. About three-fourths of New Delhi's total atmospheric pollution is caused by vehicular emissions—about 900 tons a day. The suspended particles in the air makes it polluted and matters very much. These suspended particulate matter tells the intensity of pollution of air.

Mounting pollution in the Indian Capital claimed nearly 7,500 lives and 2.5 million were treated for various air pollution related diseases in year 1996. The mounting pollution level in the city is affecting new born as well and is leading to the birth of premature and even deformed babies. Environmental analysts say an overdose of pollution adversely affects fetuses and hampers children's mental growth.

Water pollution is one of the most serious environmental problems, water pollution occurs when water is contaminated by such substances as animal waste, toxic chemicals, metals and oils.

Polluted water may look clean or dirty, but all polluted

waters contains germs, chemicals and other dangerous material that can cause illness or death.

Water pollution has become a serious problem in most countries, including Canada, India, Japan, Russia and the United States.

There are three sources of water pollution—industrial waste, sewage and agricultural chemicals and waste. Industrial waste contains toxic chemicals, and other fuels caused by power plants, factories and automobiles. Sewage waste contains garbage, human and animal excreta, and water that has been used for laundering or bathing.

Agricultural chemicals and wastes means water from rain or melted snow flows from farmlands into streams, and it carries chemicals, fertilizer, and pesticides that farmers have used on the ground, it also includes animal waste and feed lots. The fishery is also destroyed.

In just about every riverside community in the world, sewage water directly goes into the river. The river water picks up paint, pesticides, animal faeces, fertilizers, motor oil and more materials as it moves along. The awesome collection soon leaps over many other places.

The magic of water touches our lives in many ways, but the polluted water causes many diseases. Cattle droppings in the river gives birth to a parasite called cryptosporidium which causes nausea and diarrhoea. In Osgoode town of Canada, when a municipal dump was installed down the road, their water turned "black as rubber boots." Species of mammals and fish are already dying from man-made and man-allowed pollution.

The water of the river Yamunā passing through the Indian capital is "terribly polluted" according to an international food policy research institute. The river receives around 200 million litres of untreated sewage daily, beside it contains coliform counts of 25 million organisms per 100

millilitre of water. The safe level for drinking water is only 100 organisms per 100 millilitre of water.

One drop of oil can render upto 25 litres of water unfit to drink. In Canada alone about 300 million litre of used motor oil is dumped into the environment each year.

Around home, bottle water from the stores of filter equipment at the faucet, have entered the scene in the past decade.

Further evidence that water isn't what it used to be is found in business and in institutions, water coolers and air conditioners are being trashed by alert management not wanting staff or customer illness or lawsuits.

Bubonic and pneumonic plague in India and Zaire, cholera in Latin America, typhoid in South Africa, yellow fever, dengue fever, dysentery and antibiotic-resistant typhus around the world: in recent years these diseases have won a whole new lease on life. That lease was given by man's failure to keep human waste and other water and sewage problems under control.

Poor sewer and drainage systems also permit pools of stagnant water to accumulate, perfect breeding ground for mosquitoes bearing malaria and the yellow fever and dengue viruses. In India, plague was reintroduced by flea infested rats feasting on garbage piles, and in 1994 there were more cases in India alone than there had been worldwide in 1992. Half a million people fled the cities and economic damage has been estimated at \$ 1.5 billion.

Since the uses of synthetic chemicals are involved in so much of what we do and use each day, ceasing to use them is a costly and seemingly impossible undertaking. But the greatest challenge is to get man-made chemicals under control.

No man-made chemical, however harmless or dangerous by itself, operates in isolation. Each synthetic chemical

enters a vast sea of existing chemicals. The millions of combinations in countless different proportions and interactions in different environmental circumstances, and their final effects on life forms, are incalculable and not known.

It took 100 years and an industrial revolution for humans to create social and environmental conditions that threaten the health of humanity and endanger all life on earth. It will take all the talent and determination of society to turn it around.



The caterpillar gets itself imprisoned in its own cocoon. Even so is the worldly soul caught in the meshes of its own desires. But when the caterpillar develops into a bright and beautiful butterfly, it bursts the cocoon and flies out freely enjoying the light and air. Even so the worldly soul can fly out of the meshes of *Māyā* with the wings of discrimination and dispassion for worldly things.

—*Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*

If you have given up hope of ever being happy, cheer up. Never lose hope. Your soul, being a reflection of the ever joyous Spirit, is, in essence, happiness itself.

If you keep the eyes of your concentration closed, you cannot see the sun of happiness burning within your bosom; but no matter how tightly you close the eyes of your attention, the fact nevertheless remains that the happiness rays are ever trying to pierce the closed doors of your mind. Open the windows of calmness and you will find a sudden burst of the bright sun of joy within your very self.

—*Metaphysical Meditations*

Prayer is surrendering oneself to God completely.

—*Divine Rays*

Cognize the Real

O rise up to Self-consciousness and all sorrows shall vanish; ye are the essence of all happiness, ye are the soul of all joy. Nothing can do you harm. For Rāma's sake, know your *Ātman* (आत्मन्). Why delay? Know it, as it is, it ought to be known. Are ye not hunting after happiness day and night with unremitting zeal and unflagging efforts, but with unfailing failure? Don't make fools of yourselves. Seek not happiness in the objects of the senses. Dupes of senses! give up your vain search outside. The ocean of immortality is within you. The kingdom of heaven is within you. Ye are the nectar of nectars. Let both the mind and the world be melted down in God-consciousness. Just abandon your little selves to blessed madness. Ye dear ones, why care so much for the quarantine of a mortal body. Harbour not a single thought within you as to what shall become of this not self. Banish the superstition of all relations. Let the eyes perish that do not see God. Woe unto the heart that cherishes the disease of desires! Wipe away all ungodliness. Hold fast to your true position. No praise or blame can come up there, no sorrow or petty joy can disturb then. Receive Divinity into the ship and then let all go—Let go the shore, let go the little self, let go the sail! Yet the gale of 'वैराग्य' (Divine love) takes the poor flimsy dark cotton sail of this frail human bark and wafts it right out on the ocean of God-consciousness. Happy is he who is drowned in heavenly intoxication. Blessed is he who is dead drunk in divine madness. Worshipful is he who is absorbed in deep *Ātmānanda* and Supreme Bliss, being lost to the world.

—Swami Rama Tirtha

Austerity of Mind, Body and Speech

अहिंसा सत्यमस्तेयं ब्रह्मचर्यमकल्कता ।
एतानि मानसान्याहुर्व्रतानि हरितुष्टये ॥
एकभुक्तं तथा नक्तमुपवासमयाचितम् ।
इत्येवं कायिकं पुंसां व्रतमुक्तं नरेश्वर ॥
वेदस्याध्ययनं विष्णोः कीर्तनं सत्यभाषणम् ।
अपैशुन्यमिदं राजन् वाचिकं व्रतमुच्यते ॥
चक्रायुधस्य नामानि सदा सर्वत्र कीर्तयेत् ।
नाशौचं कीर्तनं तस्य सदाशुद्धिविधायिनः ॥
वर्णाश्रमाचारवत्ता पुरुषेण परः पुमान् ।
विष्णुराराध्यते पन्थाः सोऽयं तत्तोषकारणम् ॥

(Padma Purāṇa, Pātāla Khaṇḍa 84.42—46)

'Non-Violence, truthfulness, non-thieving and continence even in thought and guilelessness—the wise speak of these as the mental austerities calculated to propitiate Śrī Hari. Eating only once in twenty-four hours, eating only at night, complete abstinence from food (on certain specified days) and accepting (only) such food as is got unasked—this has been declared as bodily austerity. (And) recitation of the Vedas, singing the names and praises of Lord Viṣṇu, speaking the truth and not to carry tales—this is spoken of as austerity of speech, O King! One should chant the names of Lord Viṣṇu (the Wielder of discus) at all times and places. No impurity can mar the chanting of His names, who ever makes for purity. It is by him (alone) who observes the rules of conduct pertaining to his own *Varna* (grade in society) and *Āśrama* (stage in life) that Lord Viṣṇu (the Supreme Person) is (duly) worshipped. Such is the path leading to His pleasure.